

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## LANCER ETHNICITY SCALE (LES)

The Lancer Ethnicity Scale (LES) was developed as a clinical evaluation protocol in determining the best approach to the cosmetic laser patient, which must be done before initiating various cosmetic laser or chemical peel protocols. Ethnic composition and diversity play an overwhelming role in possible end results. "Considering a patient's natural skin color, thickness, elasticity, pore size, and density are of great importance. A detailed ethnic history, however, may uncover critical issues that are key to a successful outcome in various cosmetic procedures, including laser and chemical exfoliation surgery. Post-procedural healing rate, potential complications, and final end results may be more easily predicted when LES data is factored in.

As a standard procedure, regardless of the patient's physical features of color (skin, hair, eyes), the ethnic origin of all known grandparents and the patient's parents are determined. I have often found that a patient with a clinical Fitzpatrick skin type I or II may have genetic origins of skin types III, IV, V, and VI. If you factor in this additional historical information, clinical experience would dictate the degree of caution for such a patient who would otherwise, based on clinical appearance alone, be treated more aggressively. Given the same clinical expertise in a specific cosmetically sensitive procedure, the results would be significantly different in clinically similar patients if one had considered more distant ancestry (Fig. 1). Perhaps an alternative approach in treatment should be considered based on LES types (Fig. 2). This reasoning could be extended to other forms of laser surgery.

We live in a wonderful world of mixed ethnicity, but it sets up more significant challenges in the clinical practice of cosmetic laser surgery. The Lancer Ethnicity Scale provides a method to pre-surgically skin type our patients and more clearly predict outcome in order to give patients the greatest satisfaction and the least potential for adverse reactions and disappointments.

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## - LANCER ETHNICITY SCALE (LES) -

GEOGRAPHY	FITZPATRICK	LES SKIN TYPE
<b>African Background</b>		
Central, East, West African	Skin Type V	LES Type 5
Eritrean and Ethiopian	Skin Type V	LES Type 5
North African, Middle East Arabic	Skin Type V	LES Type 5
Sephardic Jewish	Skin Type III	LES Type 4
<b>Asian Background</b>		
Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Thai, Vietnamese	Skin Type IV	LES Type 4
Filipino, Polynesian	Skin Type IV	LES Type 4
<b>European Background</b>		
Ashkenazy Jewish	Skin Type II	LES Type 3
Celtic	Skin Type I	LES Type 1
Central, Eastern European	Skin Type III	LES Type 2
Nordic	Skin Type I-II	LES Type 1
Northern European (general)	Skin Type I	LES Types 1-2
Southern European, Mediterranean	Skin Type III	LES Type 3-4
<b>Latin/Central/South American Background</b>		
Central/South American Indian	Skin Type IV	LES Type 4
<b>North American Background</b>		
Native American (including Inuit)	Skin Type II	LES Type 3

The Lancer Ethnicity Scale (LES) is system to calculate healing efficacy and times. The **Fitzpatrick Phototype**, developed by Professor Thomas Fitzpatrick, M.D., Ph.D., of Harvard Medical School, is a classification system based on skin pigment to calculate sunlight burning. We include it as a guide here. If you're not sure of a grandparent's specific geographical origin, choose the region as close as you can with that grandparent's Fitzpatrick Skin Type.

To calculate your skin on the Lancer Ethnicity Scale, find the LES Skin Type numbers for each of your four grandparents. Add the numbers together and divide this total by four. Keeping in mind that no surgical or laser procedure is risk free, the lower your LES Skin Type, the better your skin healing should be after surgery (whether it be cosmetic or traditional) and the less risk there is of scarring, keloids, erythema, discoloration and uneven pigmentation.

**Fitzpatrick Phototype**

**Skin Type I - Never tans, always burns**  
(extremely fair skin, blonde hair, blue/green eyes)  
**Skin Type II - Occasionally tans, usually burns**  
(fair skin, sandy to brown hair, green/brown eyes)  
**Skin Type III - Often tans, sometimes burns**  
(medium skin, brown hair, brown eyes)  
**Skin Type IV - Always tans, never burns**  
(olive skin, brown/black hair, dark brown/black eyes)  
**Skin Type V - Never burns**  
(dark brown skin, black hair, black eyes)  
**Skin Type VI - Never burns**  
(black skin, black hair, black eyes)

**Risk Factors**

LES Type 1 = Very low risk  
LES Type 2 = Low risk  
LES Type 3 = Moderate risk  
LES Type 4 = Significant risk  
LES Type 5 = Considerable risk

Fig. 1.

LES Laser Resurfacing Indications		
<i>All patients are of similar age and seek treatment for crow's feet.</i>		
LES Type	Laser Treatment	Other Treatments
LES Type 1	Pulsed CO <sub>2</sub> laser.	Standard pre- and post-treatment care.
LES Type 2	Low intensity pulsed CO <sub>2</sub> laser or Erbium YAC laser.	Standard pre- and post-treatment care.
LES Type 3	Erbium YAC scanning, twice over three months.	Pre- and post-treatment care with Careful attention to pre-treatment lightening agents.
LES Type 4	Erbium YAC scanning, low intensity, twice over three months, Test site mandatory before full treatment.	Same as LES Type 3 with careful attention to the 4-6 weeks pre-treatment.
LES Type 5	No laser or chemical peels, the risk of keloids and scarring is too great. (In some cases there can be customized laser treatments but diligence is essential.	Treatment with topicals and a combination of soft tissue augmentation such as collagen injections and/or Botox.

Fig. 2.